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# THE AGRICULTURAL SITUATION

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## *A Brief Summary of Economic Conditions*

ISSUED MONTHLY BY THE BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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### A YEAR OF UPS AND DOWNS

The events of 1928 remind us once more that agriculture in this country is a regional industry. As usually happens, its progress has been largely a sectional matter. The cattle and sheep sections of the West have had another encouraging season. The Cotton Belt has done fairly well. The dairy industry has done well. But the potato growers and many wheat growers found it a very lean year.

The total acreage harvested of the chief crops was 361,000,000 acres, an increase over the previous year of nearly 4,000,000 acres. The total crop output was about 3 per cent greater.

But larger crops do not always mean more money. The total value of the principal crops, based upon prices December 1 this year, was \$8,456,000,000 compared with \$8,522,000,000 a year ago. Of course, a considerable portion of the crops will be fed and sold as livestock products, thus somewhat enhancing their final value.

The decline in wheat prices is reflected, presumably, in the smaller acreage sown this fall. According to the December estimate, about 9 per cent less wheat acreage was sown this fall than last. But, with average abandonment this winter, this would still leave a little more wheat area to harvest next summer than was harvested in 1928. Low potato prices likewise mean a smaller planting this coming year, judging from the intention expressed by southern growers to plant a 29 per cent smaller acreage this spring than last.

The livestock industries have shown up better than have the cash crops during the year past. To be sure, hog prices were below expectations this fall, a development due to several causes, among them the rather heavy runs of hogs to market and the tendency toward slow movement of products, including an accumulation of lard in storage on December 1, about twice the average amount. But cattle raisers have fared reasonably well, and the same may be said of sheep and dairy producers.

The pig survey made last month shows a fall pig crop about 5 per cent less than the fall crop of 1927, most of the decrease being in the South. It indicates also the probability that from 4 to 7 per cent fewer sows will farrow next spring than did last spring.

It is estimated that about 20 per cent more feeder cattle than last year moved through the markets into Corn Belt feed lots during the five months, July to November. But this movement fell off sharply during November, and it may be doubted whether there is a very much larger total number of cattle on feed now than a year ago. The total number of sheep and lambs on feed in the country was apparently about the same on December 1 this year as last.

## THE TREND OF CROP PRODUCTION

Commodity	5-year average 1909-1913 production	5-year average 1922-1926 production	1927 production	1928 December 1 estimate
	<i>Millions</i>	<i>Millions</i>	<i>Millions</i>	<i>Millions</i>
Winter wheat	443.3	556	553	579
Spring wheat	do	246.8	319	324
All wheat	do	690.1	807	903
Corn	do	2,712.4	2,776	2,774
Oats	do	1,143.4	1,352	1,184
Barley	do		192	264
Buckwheat	do	17.2	14	16
Flaxseed	do	19.6	20	27
Potatoes, white	do	357.7	394	407
Sweet potatoes	do	57.4	81	94
Tobacco	pounds	996	1,338	1,211
Peanuts	do		671	807
Rice	bushels	23.8	36	40.1
Hay, tame	tons	67	91	107
Apples, total	bushels	176.3	199	123
Apples, commercial	barrels		34	26
Peaches	bushels		54	46
Sugar beets	tons		7.4	7.8
Beans, dry	bushels		16	17
Grain sorghums	do		115	138

## COMMENTS ON PRODUCTION OF 1928 CROPS

**Wheat.**—The production of all wheat is estimated at 902,749,000 bushels, compared with 878,374,000 bushels in 1927, and an average for the preceding five years of 807,378,000 bushels. Only in 1915, 1918, and 1919 has production exceeded that of 1928. The harvested acreage this year is less than that of 1927, 57,724,000 acres compared with 58,784,000, but the yield per acre is larger, accounting for the increase in wheat threshed. The average yield in 1928 is reported at 15.6 bushels per acre compared with 14.9 bushels in 1927, and the preceding 10-year average of 14 bushels. Farm prices on December 1, 1928, averaged 97.2 cents per bushel. On December 1, 1927, the average price was 111.5 cents per bushel. Owing to the decline in farm price, the total farm value based on December 1 price is computed to be \$877,193,000 this year compared with \$979,813,000 in 1927.

**Feed grains crops.**—An increase of 10 per cent over 1927 is shown for the combined production of the four important feed grain crops of corn, oats, barley, and grain sorghums. The 1928 production of these crops is about 9 per cent above the 5-year average of 1922 to 1926. Corn production shows an increase of 3 per cent above the 1927 crop, oats 22 per cent, barley 34 per cent, and grain sorghum about 4 per cent.

**Corn.**—The total production of corn in 1928 is approximately 2,840,000,000 bushels as compared with 2,763,000,000 in 1927 and 2,776,000,000 bushels for the five-year average from 1922 to 1926. The harvested acreage of corn increased from 98,393,000 acres in 1927 to 100,761,000 acres in 1928, while the average yield for the entire country was practically the same for the two years, 28.1 bushels in 1927 and 28.2 bushels in 1928. The 10-year average yield of corn is 27.7 bushels. The December 1, farm price of corn this year was 75.1 cents, 72.3 cents a year ago.

On the basis of December 1 farm price the 1928 corn has a value of about \$2,133,000,000, which is nearly 7 per cent above that of last year's crop, which was valued at \$1,998,000,000.

**Cotton lint and seed.**—Cotton lint prices being paid to producers on December 1, 1928, averaged 18 cents per pound for the United States compared with 19.3 cents per pound on December 1, 1927. Applying these prices to the 1928 production as estimated on December 8, and to the final 1927 estimate, the farm value of the 1928 crop is \$1,291,589,000, and of the 1927 crop, \$1,269,885,000.

Cottonseed prices to producers on December 1, 1928, averaged \$36.29 per ton, as compared to \$36.80 on December 1, 1927. Applying these prices to the estimated production of seed of 6,390,000 tons in 1928, and 5,759,000 tons in 1927, the farm value of the 1928 seed is \$231,923,000, and of the 1927 seed, \$211,926,000.

The average prices here quoted relate to December 1, and should not be confused with the crop year average prices published by the department.

**Potatoes.**—Potato production is estimated at 462,943,000 bushels, the largest crop on record, and compares with 402,741,000 bushels in 1927, and a 5-year average 1922-1926, of 393,776,000 bushels. The price based on December 1 for the late crop and the season average for the early States was only 54 cents per bushel as compared with 96.5 cents last year, and results in a total farm value of \$250,043,000 against \$388,741,000 last year, a reduction of 36 per cent. The early commercial potato production of 55,368,000 bushels was 24 per cent greater than the 1927 crop of 44,825,000 bushels, but the value of \$31,047,000 for the early crop was only one-half of the value in 1927.

As a result of increased acreages in nearly all important States, and the second highest yield on record, this year's potato crop is the largest ever produced. This estimate includes some potatoes that were not harvested on account of the low price, and a considerable quantity of second-grade potatoes that will probably not be marketed. A thorough analysis of the entire potato situation will be made in connection with the January 1 stocks report to be issued about the middle of January.

**Tobacco.**—The production of tobacco is estimated at 1,373,501,000 pounds, which is an increase of approximately 13 per cent over the short crop of 1,211,909,000 pounds produced last year. The 1928 total is about 2 per cent above the average for 1922 to 1926, inclusive. The average price to growers, including early prices for some States where sales are just beginning, is about 18.5 cents per pound compared with 21.2 cents, the season average price last year. As frequently happens when production is increased, indications are that the gross return to the growers will be less than that of 1927. The increases in production appear in nearly all types, being especially pronounced in burley, the dark tobaccos of western Kentucky and Tennessee, and the cigar types. Flue-cured tobacco shows an increase of about 1 per cent, while Virginia dark-fired and Maryland export show decreases.

The yield per acre in the southeastern States is markedly lower this year than last, lessening to some extent the effects of overplanting in the flue-cured district.

The quality of tobacco in that district is lower than last year. Burley tobacco appears to be high in quality, though rather light in weight.

## GENERAL TREND OF PRICES AND WAGES

[1910-1914=100]

Year and month	Whole- sale prices of all com- modi- ties <sup>1</sup>	Indus- trial wages <sup>2</sup>	Prices paid by farmers for com- modities used in—			Farm wages	Taxes <sup>3</sup>
			Living	Pro- duc- tion	Living pro- duc- tion		
1910	103		98	98	98	97	
1911	95		100	103	101	97	
1912	101		101	98	100	101	
1913	102		100	102	100	104	
1914	100		102	99	101	101	100
1915	103	101	107	103	106	102	102
1916	129	114	125	121	123	112	104
1917	180	129	148	152	150	140	106
1918	198	160	180	176	178	176	118
1919	210	185	214	192	205	206	130
1920	230	222	227	175	206	239	155
1921	150	203	165	142	156	150	217
1922	152	197	160	140	152	146	232
1923	156	214	161	142	153	166	246
1924	152	218	162	143	154	166	249
1925	162	223	165	149	159	168	250
1926	154	229	164	144	156	171	253
1927	149	231	161	144	154	170	
1927							
June	146	230	161	145	155		
July	147	228				172	
August	149	231					
September	152	233	161	145	154		
October	153	231				175	
November	152	226					
December	152	233	161	142	153		
1928							
January	151	230				161	
February	151	230					
March	150	233	162	145	155		
April	152	227				166	
May	154	230					
June	153	232	162	148	156		
July	154	230				170	
August	155	231					
September	157	234					
October	153	235					
November	151	234					

<sup>1</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics. Index for 1928 obtained by multiplying new series by 156.6.

<sup>2</sup> Average weekly earnings, New York State factories. June, 1914=100.

<sup>3</sup> Index of estimate of total taxes paid on all farm property. 1914=100.

## GENERAL TREND OF PRICES AND PURCHASING POWER

[On 5-year base; August, 1909-July, 1914=100]

Year and month	Index numbers of farm prices							Prices paid by farmers for commodities bought <sup>1</sup>	Ratio of prices received to prices paid
	Grains	Fruits and vegetables	Meat animals	Dairy products	Poultry products	Cotton and cottonseed	All groups, 30 items		
1910-----	104	91	103	100	104	113	103	98	106
1911-----	96	106	87	97	91	101	95	101	93
1912-----	106	110	95	103	101	87	99	100	99
1913-----	92	92	108	100	101	97	100	100	99
1914-----	103	100	112	100	105	85	102	101	101
1915-----	120	83	104	98	103	78	100	106	95
1916-----	126	123	120	102	116	119	117	123	95
1917-----	217	202	173	125	157	187	176	150	118
1918-----	226	162	202	152	185	245	200	178	112
1919-----	231	189	206	173	206	247	209	205	102
1920-----	231	249	173	188	222	248	205	206	99
1921-----	112	148	108	148	161	101	116	156	75
1922-----	105	152	113	134	139	156	124	152	81
1923-----	114	136	106	148	145	216	135	153	88
1924-----	129	124	109	134	147	211	134	154	87
1925-----	156	160	139	137	161	177	147	159	92
1926-----	129	189	146	136	156	122	136	156	87
1927-----	128	155	139	138	141	128	131	154	85
November-----									
1923-----	110	114	100	157	191	238	136	154	88
1924-----	147	108	115	132	203	179	137	156	88
1925-----	138	194	136	146	208	144	144	158	91
1926-----	121	142	142	141	202	88	130	155	84
1927-----	120	136	141	141	189	162	137	154	89
1928									
January-----	125	144	138	145	177	152	137	(154)	89
February-----	128	153	139	145	144	141	135	(154)	87
March-----	136	174	139	142	122	147	137	155	89
April-----	144	179	142	139	121	154	140	(156)	90
May-----	160	181	151	136	128	166	148	(156)	95
June-----	152	168	150	134	127	162	145	157	92
July-----	142	156	157	134	134	170	145	<sup>2</sup> 157	<sup>2</sup> 93
August-----	120	137	162	135	140	153	139	<sup>2</sup> 157	<sup>2</sup> 89
September-----	117	127	174	141	156	142	141	<sup>2</sup> 157	<sup>2</sup> 90
October-----	116	114	160	143	168	147	137	<sup>2</sup> 157	<sup>2</sup> 88
November-----	110	109	150	144	185	146	134	<sup>2</sup> 157	<sup>2</sup> 86

<sup>1</sup> These index numbers are based on retail prices paid by farmers for commodities used in living and production, reported quarterly for March, June, September, and December. The indexes for other months are straight interpolations between the successive quarterly indexes.

<sup>2</sup> Preliminary.

## AVERAGE PRICES OF FARM PRODUCTS RECEIVED BY PRODUCERS

Actual prices received by producers at local farm markets as reported to the division of crop and livestock estimates of this bureau. Average of reports covering the United States, weighted according to relative importance of district and State.

Commodity	5-year average August 1909— July, 1914	Novem- ber, average 1910— 1914	Novem- ber, 1927	Octo- ber, 1928	Novem- ber, 1928
Cotton, per pound—cents—	12.4	12.1	20.0	18.1	17.8
Corn, per bushel—do—	64.2	59.4	73.7	84.7	75.4
Wheat, per bushel—do—	88.4	87.3	111.4	98.7	97.1
Hay, per ton—dollars—	11.87	11.89	10.54	10.60	10.89
Potatoes, per bushel—cents—	69.7	61.4	95.4	58.0	56.9
Oats, per bushel—do—	39.9	38.2	45.1	39.0	39.8
Beef cattle, per 100 pounds —dollars—	5.22	5.01	8.00	9.63	9.27
Hogs, per 100 pounds—do—	7.23	6.96	8.99	9.55	8.51
Eggs, per dozen—cents—	21.5	27.6	41.6	34.9	39.6
Butter, per pound—do—	25.5	27.4	44.5	45.2	45.6
Butterfat, per pound—do—			45.8	47.0	47.6
Wool, per pound—do—	17.7	16.9	31.1	36.0	35.9
Veal calves, per 100 pounds —dollars—	6.75	6.74	10.67	12.62	11.99
Lambs, per 100 pounds—do—	5.91	5.31	11.42	11.57	11.50
Horses, each—do—	142.00	138.00	75.00	80.00	79.00

The farm price of hogs, which began to decline in October, showed another sharp decline from October 15 to November 15. The 11 per cent decline during this period was due largely to an increase in market receipts. Receipts of hogs at seven principal markets during the 4-week period ending November 17 were approximately 12 per cent higher than for a similar period ending October 20. From October 15 to November 15, the corn-hog ratio remained at 11.3 for the United States and advanced from 12.2 to 12.6 for Iowa.

The continued decline in the farm price of beef cattle amounted to approximately 4 per cent from October 15 to November 15. The decline in the farm price was accompanied by the marketing of proportionately large supplies of good and choice fed steers for this season of the year.

The farm price of wheat declined approximately 2 per cent from October 15 to November 15. With the exception of a 2 per cent price increase in the South Atlantic States and no appreciable change in North Atlantic States, the decline in the farm prices of wheat was fairly general for the country as a whole. Declines in the farm price of wheat this season have been accompanied by the accumulation of a large visible wheat supply and small exports.

The farm price of potatoes declined approximately 2 per cent from October 15 to November 15 for the country as a whole. At 57 cents per bushel the farm price on November 15 compares with 95 cents on November 15, 1927, and 61 cents, the November 15 average from 1910 to 1914. While the farm prices of potatoes advanced 9 per cent in the far West and 5 per cent in the South Central States during

the month prior to November 15, farm price declines amounted to 7 per cent in the North Atlantic States, 5 per cent in the North Central States, and 2 per cent in the South Atlantic States.

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### SUMMARY OF THE YEAR IN VARIOUS STATES

[Reports from State representatives of the Division of Crop and Livestock Estimates of this bureau]

#### NEW ENGLAND

The past season has not been particularly favorable to New England farmers. Most crops have produced only moderate yields and are being sold at only fair prices at best.

**Potatoes:** A total of 46,552,000 bushels of potatoes were finally produced in the New England States. This total does not differ materially from the production of a year ago, and average. A large acreage was planted and yields were comparatively light, however. Much of the potato crop is of poor quality. Potato prices have been unusually low. This is due largely to the fact that the crop for the country, as a whole, is the largest on record, totaling 463,000,000 bushels. At present conditions, car-lot movement of potatoes in New England may be expected to fall short of the totals of a year ago, due largely to poor quality and low prices being received for the crop.

**Apples:** The season was not favorable to fruit production. The wet season favored insect and disease damage. Total commercial apple production at 1,479,000 barrels is the lightest crop since 1922. Satisfactory prices have prevailed for good quality fruit. McIntosh were a particularly light crop in all parts of New England, and Baldwins produced only a fair crop.

**Cranberries:** Cranberries at 325,000 barrels are only a moderate crop and are selling at good prices.

**Onions:** Set onions made only a fair yield. Seed onions are a very poor crop both in yield and quality. Onions are selling at high prices, but few onions of good quality were produced in New England this year.

**Tobacco:** The tobacco crop was seriously injured by pole sweat while curing. Much of the crop is of very poor quality. Good quality tobacco will sell at good prices, but there is little demand for the low grades.

**Milk production:** High grain prices during 1928 have been accompanied by a similar increase in milk prices. Prices of dairy cows remain high. Hay was a bumper crop. Other feed crops made fair yields in most places.

C. D. STEVENS.

#### NEW YORK

The crop season of 1928 was very irregular, starting off with an open winter that was responsible for much winter-killing of hay and wheat, followed by a dry, early spring favorable for early tillage. The tables then turned, with late May, all of June, and early July unseasonably wet. The result was that hay and wheat improved materially, though late spring crops were seriously delayed in planting,

with a forced curtailment of acreage of crops, such as beans, potatoes, cabbage, and buckwheat, as compared with intended plantings.

Excessive rains the last of June and in early July were especially disastrous to some of the vegetable crops grown on muck. The crop of the important Orange County onion section was nearly annihilated by floods, bringing almost tragic misfortune to growers, who had also suffered from the August flood of 1927 and from either poor crops or low prices for several previous years.

In the Elba section of western New York onions were badly flooded, and some lettuce was ruined. Part of the flooded areas was replanted to lettuce. Other sections suffered relatively little, though yields were generally light. Prices for nearly all muck crops ruled fairly high throughout the season, and in the western New York sections, as a whole, the total cash returns were very pleasing in comparison with earlier years, in spite of the light production.

Canning crops were irregular as to yields, and returns in general were only moderate. Cabbage, on a sharply reduced acreage suffered from late planting and unfavorable weather, and yields were very light, with prices, both for Domestic and Danish, very satisfactory on a per ton basis.

Fruit crops were disappointing. Peaches and grapes were much more abundant than last season, with poor returns. Compulsory marking of grape packages with the grades, and the general adoption of State-Federal shipping-point inspection in the principal shipping areas are believed to have meant the difference between heavy losses and very moderate returns for this highly concentrated industry. The crop of peaches was much better than in 1927. While prices were low, the growth of trucking and roadside stands, with the resultant wide distribution of the crop, resulted in complete harvest.

The cherry crop was light and prices good.

Apples, with a crop substantially below average and much poor-quality fruit, were disappointing to growers. The high prices realized last year are not prevalent this season, though the crop will probably bring greater total returns than last season.

The old, reliable potato crop turned out more bushels than last year, due partly to increased acreage and partly to better yields. The crop on Long Island was lighter than last year and returns have been almost desperately poor. Many of the up-state commercial sections also had light crops, and this, with low prices, has cast a spell of gloom over the growers. Because of many local markets, and no excess of potatoes, the growers near many of the up-state cities have averaged somewhat better than the prices to growers in more remote sections.

Field beans, in spite of a bad start, came through with a fairly good crop, both as to yield and quality, while prices have been generally excellent.

Buckwheat suffered a sharp drop in acreage, due to unseasonable weather at planting time, and the crop was rather light, although harvested in good shape.

Hay, although sharply reduced in acreage, partly because of harvest difficulties and low prices, yielded only a fair crop. In the sections where hay was formerly an important cash crop, conditions have been especially disheartening because of loss of markets brought about by decreases in horses.

Other feed crops, such as corn silage, oats, and barley, are not far from last year's totals.

The dairy industry has had a better year than for some time. Prices of milk have been more favorable, veals have been fair in price, and those raising cows to sell have received high prices. On the other hand, cattle shipped into the State for replacements, to overcome the heavy decreases in young stock started as calves a few years ago, and to fill the places of cows condemned for tuberculosis, have come at high prices. Bovine tuberculosis eradication has gone forward steadily and, in general, the appraisal values and the reimbursements from State and Federal funds for condemned animals have been sufficiently generous to provide new cattle. The interruption in production of those herds badly infected is, of course, annoying.

The dairy industry is reaching the point where, with continued growth of population and increasing realization of the food value of fresh milk, the November supply of fresh milk for market leaves little surplus for other purposes. There has been much discussion of the possibility of stabilizing production and distributing production over the entire year more uniformly than at present, to more nearly meet the fairly uniform seasonal needs of the markets, and to provide sufficient supplies of early winter milk for future years. Many intricate problems are involved, but it seems probable that a sound and intelligent program will be worked out. If this is accomplished and acted upon, it will be an epoch-making step in the adjustment of an agricultural industry to the needs of the people.

There have apparently been no striking changes in the poultry situation, which appears to have been fairly stable.

Less complaint of shortage of farm help has been heard than in several years, though wages have remained at high levels. City industries have apparently been running at a lower level of employment than for some years, and there is, of course, a constant interplay between city and country.

There appears to be an increase in optimism over the prospects for agriculture, as evidenced by increased Farm Bureau membership. Many farmers are in hard shape financially, but reasonably good financing is generally possible.

Taking the State as a whole, the various sections may be summed up as follows:

Western New York fruit and crop section, only fair, but, with the exception of potatoes, better than last year; Hudson Valley fruit section, very good; dairy sections generally excellent; Long Island, poor.

R. L. GILLETT.

#### PENNSYLVANIA

Agriculture in Pennsylvania, as well as the agriculturist, has just experienced one of the worst, if not the worst, year in the history of the Commonwealth. The value of crops produced, approximately \$220,000,000, is—not taking into consideration the decreased purchasing power of the dollar—the lowest since 1911. The slightly better prices prevailing for livestock and dairy products will offset to only a small degree the decrease in the value of crops this year, compared with last, of \$30,000,000. Pennsylvania is not a stock-raising State.

The season was adverse. Timely planting of crops was prevented, harvest during the summer months was retarded by too much rain, weeds thrived, and extensive damage was done in some localities by severe storms. The fall was very dry, making plowing in areas west of the mountains almost impossible, and retarding the growth of winter grains.

Corn was a short crop in many of the dairy sections; many fields were abandoned, and a number of silos never filled this year, but the crop, as a whole, was of better quality than that of 1927.

Wheat suffered severely from winterkilling and the Hessian fly, and shortly after harvest the price was sharply reduced by competition from Pacific coast flour. Normally, when price of wheat approaches \$1.50, Pennsylvania growers are faced with competition from some outside source. Mills seem to be overstocked; consumers are buying only as their needs demand.

Both quality and yield of oats were reduced by unfavorable weather at harvest. Buckwheat, in which Pennsylvania is usually the ranking State, suffered a sharp reduction in harvested acreage, as well as yield, in comparison with last year.

The situation with regard to tobacco growers is uncertain. The Pennsylvania crop is much larger than last year, but quality is not so good. Other States, producers of cigar types, show substantial increases in production this year, and it is difficult to see how Pennsylvania producers may expect a price in excess of that received last year.

Potato growers, not only in Pennsylvania, increased acreage, despite announcement of an intended general expansion, which, together with the largest yield on record, has caused ruinously low prices. In some sections farmers who planted with the expectation of meeting their obligations with the proceeds from the sale of the crop, found themselves facing financial embarrassment; in others, the crop was a failure, and farmers will have to buy for food. Lehigh County potatoes have recently topped the Philadelphia market by 15 cents a bushel, but when allowance is made for the percentage of the crop running culls, the margin is not so significant. Storage holdings are exceptionally large.

Thousands of acres of hay were never harvested this year. Quality of the crop is inferior. No increase in acreage of annual legumes, which are essential to a prosperous dairy industry, has been made in the last few years.

Fruit production this year was considerably above last year but prices were much lower; the major fruit crops, on the basis of December 1 prices, are estimated to be worth \$2,200,000 more than the 1927 crop. Many apples are reported to be in storage, awaiting a rise in price of 50 cents to \$1 a barrel, which is expected as soon as the local supply held by farmers is cleaned up. An increase in the price of grapes has been attributed to marketing inspection, but even this margin, together with the benefits of a reduced freight rate, is not sufficient, it is claimed, to allow a fair profit in the industry.

The tomato market was reported good for producers of fancy stock, which commanded a premium of 10 cents; canners are promising to double the premium for next year.

The poultry industry has apparently been overexpanded. Hatcherymen indicate a reduction in the percentage increase in the capacity of incubators for the 1929 season. Eggs have experienced a drop of

20 cents a dozen in the short space of a few days, but an improvement in prices is expected as the holiday season approaches. Cocidiosis is prevalent in many flocks and has become chronic; pox cut egg production at the time of high prices, and reduced income sharply. A majority of the best poultrymen are "getting by." The opinion has been expressed that the industry is at the bottom of the cycle and better days are ahead.

Milk prices now are somewhat better than a year ago; this improvement has been brought about by a shortage in supply. The effect may be the entering of western producers into the local markets, and, when the shortage of home-grown feed is taken into consideration, it is doubtful if the situation of the dairymen has been improved any. The price received by producers in western Pennsylvania was possibly not quite so good this year as that of 1927, due to price cutting by independents on the Pittsburgh market.

Of a cattle population of 1,340,000, 63 per cent is under official supervision in tuberculosis eradication work. This work is now apparently meeting with the approval of the farmers. Pennsylvania is a pioneer in the suppression of bovine infections abortion, which is estimated to be costing the farmers \$5,000,000 annually. In 1919, 100 blood samples were taken; in 1928, 35,000. About 2,000 herds are under supervision; of these, 100 are on the abortion free list. Control of the disease is made difficult on account of replacement in herds occasioned by the disposal of tuberculosis reactors.

It is estimated that this year electric service will be made available to 25,000 rural subscribers, one-fifth of whom are farmers, but it is maintained that under the present arrangement charges are excessive and the service beyond the reach of much of the farming areas.

The value of farm land in Pennsylvania is, considering the purchasing power of the dollar, less to-day than it was in 1890. Prospective operators with new capital are not so plentiful as they were a decade ago. Increased taxes, largely the result of financing new ideas with respect to roads and education, by an old method of raising revenues, rest heavily upon the farmer. Inequality in the assessment of real estate has been made to operate to his disadvantage. There is practically no market for farms not located on improved highways; few farms are worth more than the cost of replacing the improvements, and many can be rented for the taxes.

This unsatisfactory condition of agriculture is not the result of an unfavorable season only, nor is it the intention to convey the idea that all the farmers are facing financial disaster. The best land of the State is operated by a class of thrifty and industrious farmers of simple habits, who have succeeded in accumulating a store of this world's goods. Farmers' cooperatives anticipate an increase in business during the coming year. But these favorable indications may be found in other States as well, which are competitors of ours and seemingly are better prepared for the new era upon which agriculture is entering.

Neither the topography of the land, the size of farm, nor the temperament of the people or their economic status, readily admits of large scale production and the attendant economies, which are claimed for the agricultural revolution. The State has been invaded by serious pests: The European corn borer from the Northwest, the Mexican bean beetle from the Southwest, the oriental fruit moth and the Japanese beetle from the Southeast, the white pine blister

rust from the Northeast, and the potato wart in the Middle. The agricultural population has been declining; the average size of the farm family in Pennsylvania, according to the State Census of 1927, is only 4.4 persons.

E. L. GASTEIGER.

FLORIDA

During the past year citrus, as usual, came first in returns to growers. Due to a light setting of fruit and prolonged dry weather, production was even lower than for the short crop of 1925-26, but price per box was unusually high, and the crop returns were in excess of \$50,000,000. While the present crop was materially reduced by the storm in September, estimated production is still over 4,000,000 boxes in excess of last season. During the past summer the Citrus Clearing House was organized, and should be of material assistance in marketing the large crop of the present season. This organization of growers was formed with the assistance of the Secretary of Agriculture and other members of the Department of Agriculture, and should provide better and wider distribution as well as statewide advertising of Florida citrus.

Truck-crop acreages during the winter and spring months were, as a whole, larger than for the preceding season. New areas were brought under cultivation in the Everglades, and there was a marked increase in production in this section. Due largely to the September storm, fall acreages are unusually light, but indications are for winter and spring plantings fully as heavy as those of the past season.

For the staple crops, the past season has been one of comparatively low yields. Heavy spring rains caused considerable damage, and yields of cotton and corn were low. The acreage of tobacco showed a further increase, but yield and quality were below last year. Yield per acre and production of Irish potatoes were unusually large, but the crop was late, and with heavy competition prices were generally unsatisfactory.

Peaches and pears yielded better than a year ago, and there was a larger crop of pecans. New acreages of grapes are still going out, and production of this crop should show a substantial increase each year for at least three or four years.

No marked changes have occurred in livestock production. Dairy cattle are slowly increasing in number. Range cattle are decreasing, but not as rapidly as during the preceding year. Poultry are increasing in number, but production still remains below the needs of Florida consumers.

H. A. MARKS.

VIRGINIA

Weather conditions were only fairly favorable for agriculture during the year. During the winter months frequent freezing and thawing when there was no snow cover did much damage to the wheat, rye, and oat crops, with the result that a large percentage of the acreage planted was plowed up and planted to other crops. During March and early April, conditions were favorable for farm work, which made excellent progress. Frost in April damaged fruit and truck crops in the eastern part of the State, but fortunately the loss in the commercial apple districts was not so severe, and there was an excellent set of fruit in most sections of the State. The peach crop was damaged considerably by the frost, except in the best-located orchards. Cool

weather during May and June retarded the growth of such crops as corn, tobacco, peanuts, and cotton. June was an unusually cool and wet month, which retarded farm work and delayed crop growth. July was generally dry and favorable for harvesting hay, but in the central and southern districts there was not sufficient moisture for corn and tobacco, which suffered severely. Heavy rains the middle of August relieved the drought, but caused streams to flood, which damaged corn on low grounds to a considerable extent. There were also heavy rains and windstorms in September, which caused further damage to corn, tobacco, cotton, and peanuts, and hindered preparation of land for seeding fall grains. Weather conditions during October and early November were ideal for harvesting crops, and seeding fall grains, and by the middle of November all of this work had been completed.

The composite yield of all crops on November 1 was estimated to be 4.6 per cent above the average for the past 10 years, but the decline in the prices of potatoes and tobacco caused a reduction in the total farm income, as these are two most important money crops. The wheat crop was a great surprise, as yields were much better than growers had expected, since the crop had come through the winter in such poor condition. The average yield was the second largest on record. The total production was, therefore, greater than in 1927, and as prices were approximately the same, the income from wheat was larger than last year.

There was an increase in the acreage planted to corn, but the August and September rains caused the rivers and creeks to overflow, which destroyed most of the crop east of the Blue Ridge Mountains on low grounds. It is estimated that this amounted to 5 per cent of the total acreage, and probably a larger percentage of the production, as the best yields are usually made on the low grounds. The yield per acre in many sections was very good, but the average for the State is less than last year, so the total production was smaller than in recent years.

The potato crop is the principal source of farm income in eight counties in the eastern part of the State. The yield was unusually good and as the acreage was larger than last year the production was the largest in recent years. Owing to the delayed shipments from Southern States and a large crop in these States, prices were exceedingly low, and most growers lost money on this crop. The average price was only 41 cents per bushel, compared with \$1.36 in 1927.

The tobacco crop was damaged by the heavy rains and windstorms in September, and the yield was not so good as usual. The quality was also quite poor. The production of flue-cured and fire-cured types was less than in 1927, but there was a small increase in the sun-cured type and a larger increase in Burley tobacco. The total production for the State was about 10 per cent less than in 1927, and as prices were lower the total value of the crop was less than in 1927.

The apple crop was much larger than the average, and the quality was very good. Prices were much less than the high prices of 1927, but up to the average of recent years. The total value of the apple crop, therefore, was greater than in the preceding year.

The early hay crop was reduced by unfavorable weather conditions, but the late crop was quite heavy. There was some loss of hay from the rains at harvest, but the production was as large as the splendid crop of 1927.

Following the short crop of cotton in 1927, the acreage was increased approximately 30 per cent, and the yield was fairly good, so the production was much larger than last year.

The peanut crop did not turn out as well as had been expected, as the wet weather during September was unfavorable for growth. Truck growers, generally, had one of the poorest seasons in recent years, as prices for most of the important crops were unusually low.

Livestock contributed a larger percentage than usual of the total farm income during 1928, as prices for most livestock and livestock products were much better than usual. A splendid crop of lambs was produced and sold at excellent prices. Wool brought the highest prices since 1920. There was a slight decline in the number of hogs and also in the prices, but cattle growers had an excellent market for cattle, and there was a slight increase in the number sold. Prices for dairy products were slightly higher than in 1927. Owing to poor pastures and the sale of a larger number of cows, the production was slightly less than in 1927. Poultry prices were generally better than in 1927, but there was a slight decline in the number of chickens raised. The income from poultry was probably larger than in 1927.

While no definite statistics are available, the total farm income for 1928 was undoubtedly smaller than in 1927. The great diversity of Virginia agriculture, however, saved the State from any serious decline in its agriculture.

HENRY M. TAYLOR.

#### KANSAS

Kansas harvested more acres of field crops in 1928 than in any year of her history. The total yield of grain is the largest on record. Of wheat and corn combined, the total production was 71,000,000 bushels larger than the former record established in 1924. Hay crops of the merchantable class yielded generally lighter than a year ago and the acreage of alfalfa was the smallest in many years. But the production of coarse forage was very ample, and a much larger acreage of cornstalks for grazing is available than for several years. Winter range conditions in the western counties are excellent, with an unusually heavy growth of gramma and buffalo grass. Idle and unproductive plowlands, and acreage of crops not harvested, were confined to limited areas in the marginal sections of the western end of the State or to localities that suffered from hail or from disastrous floods in the eastern counties.

Winter wheat yielded much beyond the average acre return. The harvest was accomplished under great strain from wet weather that interfered with the use of power machinery. Harvest was prolonged into the first week of September—an abnormally late date. The grain suffered some loss in merchantable quality to partly offset increased yields. The market was not entirely satisfactory and declining prices retarded the movement from farm to elevator.

The new acreage of wheat lacks only 1 per cent of being as large as last fall's seeding, and enters the winter in better condition. Seeding began under adverse conditions—the surface soil was very dry, and a large part of the acreage available lacked early preparation because of delayed harvest and a wet midsummer. Only summer-fallowed fields or scattering ones that had been plowed in July had sufficient moisture to germinate seed and maintain life. The first of October brought abundant rains and seeding them began

in earnest, with assurance of good stands. A high percentage had emerged by December and although the top growth is small the plants are healthy and soil moisture assures that none will perish from drought during the winter.

And Kansas came through with a bumper corn crop in the same year in which the record winter wheat crop had been matched. With 179,000,000 bushels of high quality corn, maturing early, and ready for a market whose visible supply was at a minimum, with cattle prices still showing fair margins of feeding profit and feeders eager to buy; the Kansas corn farmer found himself well situated whether he wished to market on the hoof or by the bushel.

Barley, rye, oats, and flax all made satisfactory yields. The barley crop was probably the largest ever produced, due partly to a favorable season, and partly to an increased acreage seeded in northwestern Kansas on land where wheat failed to withstand the winter. Oats made about an average return, and the quality was above average.

The sorghum crops had a long growing season and matured almost perfectly in all sections of the State. Although the yield of neither grain nor forage is as large as a year ago, the quality of the grain is much better, and the supply of coarse forage produced will be ample for winter roughing of livestock. The use of wheat combines in harvesting kafir and milo has proven very satisfactory, and greatly lessened the cost of harvesting and threshing. The milo district of southwestern Kansas also produced an excellent crop of broomcorn in 1928, on a decidedly larger acreage than last year. The brush is generally of good length hull, but in the northern portion of the district was badly discolored by continuous rains just after harvest. Up to December 1 only about half the brush had passed out of producers hands. Prices so far have been fairly profitable, considering the good yield realized.

Fruit crops were not so good, but they form a minor contribution to the Kansas agricultural income. Apples were about a third of a crop; grapes, average or better; bush fruits fair; and pears and peaches, negligible. The potato crop broke all Kansas records, but the market was disastrous, and from a financial point the crop was worse than a failure, affecting the Kaw Valley income materially.

It was a prosperous season for the livestock industry. Flint Hills pastures were almost ideal in carrying power all summer, and grass-fat cattle from this region found a profitable market in the late summer and early fall months. Until December, fat-steer prices ruled strong and grain-lot feeders marketing early showed a credit balance. Kansas farmers marketed more hogs every month of 1928 than in corresponding months of 1927, and up to December had sold 20 per cent more hogs than in the same period of 1927. The corn-hog ratio proved very profitable up till the late fall months. The new fall pig crop arrived under favorable weather conditions and from a larger number of sows than a year ago. With abundance of local corn in sight, producers have also bred for a heavier spring farrowing than in the spring of 1928.

Much of the cash already realized from the season's operations has gone into debt liquidation and expansion investment. Many Kansas farmers are now out from under a load of past-due paper and have a modest surplus of working capital. The farm-credit situation is

strong, whether for long-time loans on farm real estate or for current financing on chattels and personal security.

EDWARD C. PAXTON.

MICHIGAN

Crop-growing conditions in 1928 were the best in many years. The rainfall was generally sufficient for good growth at all times, and only one county in the State experienced a droughty condition. The rainfall in the east-central district known as the "Thumb" section and in the Upper Peninsula was excessive at times. The heavy rains in the "Thumb" district drowned out many acres of beans, sugar beets, potatoes, and corn. The larger part of the 62,000 acres of beans lost in the State were in this district. In addition to the losses of acreage, the yields of cultivated crops were reduced because of damaged stands. The losses were severely felt by the farmers of this district because of extensive damage to some of these crops over this same area in each of the three preceding years. Notwithstanding the heavy losses to the bean crop, the total production was nearly a fourth greater than in 1927, and, as the price is nearly 50 per cent higher, the total value exceeds that of last year by nearly \$12,000,000.

The corn crop was also much better than in 1927, both in quantity and quality, and has a value of nearly \$10,000,000 more. While the potato crop is fully 50 per cent larger, the low price reduces the total value to \$6,500,000 under last year. The wheat crop is worth about \$5,000,000 less and the hay crop \$2,500,000 less than in 1927. Considerable acreage of both of these crops was lost through winter-killing, and the remaining stands were more or less injured, especially in the extreme southern counties.

The fruit crops were larger and brought some increase in total income, but prices were generally below the level of the previous year. The cherry crop was much larger and brought a much greater return to growers than in 1927.

Dairy and poultry returns continue to maintain a stable farm income in most sections of the State and contribute largely to the general prosperity of Michigan farmers. The high price of dairy cows is probably not helping the dairy farmer except to the extent that he is increasing his supply and surplus of dairy heifers.

Better prices for other livestock, except hogs, have prevailed, and the condition of livestock in the State is very good at the present time. Hence the livestock situation presents a rather favorable prospect, especially when account is taken of the fact that the hog-price cycle is at or near the low point, and better prices may be expected for the coming year. Another favorable condition in Michigan is the abundance of coarse feed and a generally adequate supply of grain in all sections for feeding purposes.

While there is still considerable complaint of high taxes, high wages, and inability to meet current and standing obligations, it is a fact that many farmers have been able this fall to materially reduce or completely wipe out, debts of several years' standing. More farm improvements are also being made than in other recent years.

The total value of crops produced this year exceeds that of last year by nearly \$9,000,000 and while this total is not as great as in either 1926 or 1925, the general situation seems to be improved. Very few really good, able-bodied farmers are complaining of existing

conditions, but there is a large number of farmers in this State who are many years past the prime of life, whose children have left the farm, and who are physically unable to perform the strenuous labor involved on a farm, who find it difficult to make a financial success of their farms with hired or tenant labor. To this class, farm life is a serious problem. Aside from this type, the cry of distress emanates largely from those who have suffered heavy losses from local weather conditions during the season and from those who would not ordinarily be successful under more favorable economic conditions. The Michigan farmer with experience, judgment, and vision, who applies the same aggressive methods to his undertakings as the average business man, may expect a measure of financial success closely approaching that obtaining in the five years immediately preceding the World War.

V. H. CHURCH.

#### ALABAMA

The year has not been altogether profitable to the farmer. A little more than the usual acreage was planted to crops, yields were below the standard of recent years, and prices have not been entirely satisfactory for commercial crops.

The aggregate crop acreage was increased about 4 per cent, the increase mostly occurring in a few more acres per plow and a few more plows being operated.

The weather was unfavorable immediately following planting, and while the fertilizers used were radically increased, some were lost by leaching.

Cultivation was about up to the standard, and the weather was better toward the end of the season.

The cotton crop, with an increased acreage, turned out nearly as large as that of last year, and with a fair price only, farmers have received about an average cash income from that crop.

Corn yields were very low, and the aggregate production was insufficient for farm use.

Hay was about an average, but still not enough grown and saved for farm consumption.

The peanut crop was short in yield, and the price has not made up the shortage.

Irish potatoes yielded below the average, and the crop was not at all profitable.

Sweet potatoes are sufficient for home use and local consumption.

Milk production has been slightly below the standard of recent years.

Egg production has reached the average per hen, but flocks have been closely culled and are not so numerous as last year.

Beef cattle have been sold off rather closely, and numbers are below that of recent years.

Hogs have also been closely sold and the pig crop is a bit short.

Farm labor is quite plentiful, the demand being considerably reduced by farmers taking advantage of improved machinery and more economical cultural methods.

The gross farm income is down from former years and profits were off considerably.

Activities for the new year are problematic.

F. W. GIST.

## MISSISSIPPI

From present indications the income of Mississippi farmers for the year 1928 will be about 5 per cent less than in 1927, somewhat larger than in 1926, but considerably below 1925 income. The farm value of the cotton crop, the principal source of cash income, has closely approximated the 1927 value, but yield per acre was lower this year, and cost of production was larger. For most other crops, except fruits and pecans, farm values have been less than last year, but this loss in value has been compensated somewhat by increased returns from livestock and livestock products. Returns from commercial truck crops in 1928 were about 30 per cent less than in 1927.

A larger proportion than usual of farmers' income this year will be expended for feed grains during 1929, as this year's corn crop is the smallest in many years, and about 33 per cent less than the 1927 crop, while the hay crop, although larger than average, is 5 per cent below 1927 production.

The distribution of income has been different from that of 1927, as the Delta counties produced about 50 per cent of the State's cotton crop this year, compared with only 38½ per cent of the total crop in 1927, and income in these counties has been materially larger, while in the hill counties, particularly south Mississippi, income has been considerably less than in 1927, except in a relatively few counties drawing a material proportion of farm income from the sale of milk to condensing plants and cheese factories.

L. C. HEIDELBERG.

## GEORGIA

Reductions in production and value of Georgia crops this year reflect in a fair measure the unfavorable aspects of the season. A late, cold spring followed by frequent and heavy rains in August and September resulted in relatively low per acre yields and general reductions in production and value of the principal field crops. The total value of all crops declined approximately \$27,000,000, or 10 per cent below the total for last year.

Of the money crops usually exceeding a million dollars in value, cotton, tobacco, watermelons, peanuts, and cowpeas show substantial reductions in total and per acre values. Sweet potatoes, pecans, and apples each increased in total value over last year. Better prices for sweet potatoes and larger production of pecans and apples were responsible for these increases. The net decline in value of the above cash crops, when compared with 1927, is approximately \$14,000,000, or 10 per cent.

Cotton, representing about 90 per cent of the total value of all cash crops produced in the State, accounts for a correspondingly large proportion of the loss in total value. This loss was felt most keenly in the central part of the State, as the greatest reduction occurred there, following a very short crop last year. Production in the southern territory was slightly below last year, while the northern part of the State enjoyed another satisfactory crop.

A record tobacco crop sold at very low prices, and as a result growers are generally dissatisfied with the project. Peach growers also experienced a very unsatisfactory season, the crop being very heavy and the quality very poor. Returns from watermelons, peanuts, pecans, and apples were fairly satisfactory. Production of

practically all food and feed crops fell below last year's figures, the corn crop being the smallest in many years.

Stating the situation briefly, Georgia farmers are not as well fortified with cash and supply crops as they were one year ago. North Georgia has held its own, at least; the central counties and part of the southern counties have experienced a rather disastrous season, while other southern counties have experienced more moderate reverses.

V. C. CHILDS.

#### WYOMING

Wyoming agricultural products came to the close of 1928 showing values much above last year, and any recent preceding years. From the production side, crops show slightly below the 10-year average, while livestock much more than offset the deficiency.

The season was variable (winter and spring dry to May 15, then more than normal moisture to July 20, followed by a prolonged drought to about October 10) and the final outcome of crops did not measure up to the midseason promises. Prices have been disappointingly low for potatoes (a crop of considerable and growing importance in this State) offset by very satisfactory prices for hay and dry edible beans, making the total for 12 principal crops \$33,214,000 compared to \$30,962,000 for 1927. Hay is mostly fed locally by growers themselves or sold to feeders who feed sheep and cattle in the vicinity.

Prices received for cattle and sheep have been highly favorable, and encouraging to the development of full capacity operations. There is a tendency to hold ewe lambs and breeding heifers and cows to build up and improve herds. While hogs have been less attractive, they still bring good enough returns to induce some expansion. Livestock values will be some higher than last year and much higher than two years ago. There are a few more sheep and cattle on feed for fattening than a year ago. There is considerable increase in poultry and particularly turkeys.

The financial situation is usually commented upon by stockmen and other reporters as "easier," "favorable," "satisfactory," etc. High prices have induced some close selling, with practically no liquidations. Stockmen are also cautious about stocking up at the high prices, where it is necessary to purchase to do so.

Soil and moisture conditions are now better than a year ago, and better than usual. The winter wheat and rye crops sown this fall show good condition.

Wyoming has plenty of room for it, and there is a tendency toward agricultural expansion, to which the present outlook is encouraging. This fall the Union Pacific Railroad completed a new branch line across the southeastern portion of the State from Egbert to Torrington. This gives a better outlet for some promising farming sections and tends toward more rapid development.

W. W. PUTNAM.

#### OKLAHOMA

Over 6 per cent more land was in field crops this season than last, and the total value of field crops this year was over 7 per cent greater. Field crops brought returns of \$280,000,000 in 1928, compared with \$261,000,000 in 1927 and \$276,000,000 in 1926. The increased total value of field crops for 1928 is due mostly to wheat. While the price

of wheat was considerably less than in 1927, the total value of the crop was practically 50 per cent larger, owing to a better yield and larger harvested acreage.

All grain crops showed a larger per acre value than in 1927.

Although the money return from the cotton crop this season is not quite so great as a year ago, it is more evenly distributed, and will help to stabilize conditions in the southern and southeastern part of the State.

The high prices paid for livestock gave cattlemen and farmers a good income from this source. All cattle quarantines in the State have been lifted in the past year, and this clears the way for greater progress in dairying and stock raising. This is especially true of the southeastern part of the State.

In general, the condition of agriculture in this State has shown a great improvement during 1928.

STUART L. BRYAN.

TENNESSEE

The year 1928 can be considered as a fairly satisfactory year. The total acreage of all crops was reduced about 1.2 per cent, but the value was increased about 7.7 per cent. Yields were about 97.2 per cent of the 10-year average.

The cold, wet spring caused late planting, in poorly prepared seed beds, of most crops. With corn, this was intensified by summer drought in the western portions of the State and floods in the eastern bottoms. The resulting yield of 19.5 bushels per acre is the lowest in many years. Many farmers who ordinarily have corn for sale will be in the market as buyers. Total production is estimated at about 81 per cent of the 5-year average.

The cotton crop was hidden by June grass, many fields were still infested with this grass, almost as high as the cotton stalks, to the end of the season. The yield of upland cotton was generally very poor, but abnormal yields in the bottoms, with a late winter, raised the yield to about 9 pounds above the 10-year average. The total production is estimated at about 10 per cent above the 5-year average. Prices were satisfactory.

Farmers were more generous in the application of high-grade fertilizer this year than ever before.

The tobacco acreage was increased about 28 per cent over the short acreage of 1927, but is still below the average. Yields were about normal with prices generally satisfactory. Total production is about 7 per cent below usual. The quality of the crop is reported to be good. Burley farmers are particularly optimistic concerning prices.

Truck growers, greatly encouraged by excellent prices for their crops in 1927, made a considerable increase in their acreage this year. As a result, shipments fell on a glutted market with prices too low in many instances to pay the gathering, packing, and express charges. Trucking for commercial shipment is restricted to certain areas in West Tennessee, and reaction from the low prices obtained was not generally reflected over the State.

Fruit prices ranged somewhat lower than in 1927, but a heavy production brought the total value to over twice that of last year.

Due to the fact that several commercial condenseries have been located in the State during the past two or three years, there has been a marked increase in dairying activity. This is looked upon with

favor by the leading exponents of diversification in agriculture, and the movement seems justified in view of the fact that it has enjoyed marked success from its inception.

Tennessee lamb and wool growers have, as usual, had a prosperous year in the marketing of their product. This is the only crop, according to the opinion of many, that yields a profitable return from year to year.

S. T. MARSH.

#### KENTUCKY

Considered as a whole, agricultural conditions in Kentucky have been very unfavorable, particularly in the western counties, including about half of the State. Conditions have been considerably improved, however, by the better prices being paid for tobacco since the markets opened, around December 1. This is particularly true in the Burley tobacco area (chiefly central and northern counties), where Burley tobacco is bringing the highest prices since 1919, but the yield per acre is very light. Quality of Burley is exceptionally high. Dark tobacco prices also are better than formerly.

Considered by sections, the western third, or half of the State, has been, and still is, in extremely bad condition (agriculturally). And since this is predominantly an agricultural area, this condition has depressed the whole area. In the rich phosphatic limestone counties of the "Blue Grass" in central Kentucky, and also in general throughout the limestone area, including central and northern Kentucky, conditions have been much better than in western Kentucky, although none too good. This central-northern area produces the bulk of the Burley tobacco which has sold at good prices for the last two years, 1927 and 1928; it also produces the bulk of the spring lamb crop of something like 600,000 head, which have sold for good prices. On hogs, corn, cattle, and other general farming, production conditions have been less favorable.

The State may therefore be considered as in fair to good condition in the central and northern (burley tobacco) area; but in very bad condition in the western third, or half, producing the five dark types of tobacco (largely for export), corn and hogs, and some cattle. The season of 1928 was the worst ever known in western Kentucky, and 1927 had been bad. Continuous rains, cloudbursts, and storms throughout June prevented cultivation, put all crops into weeds and grass, and washed up or covered with mud or high water a large percentage of the crops. Many people planted corn or tobacco as much as three times, only to lose it. After the June floods and continuous rains in western Kentucky, drought set in and lasted until near September 1. This was followed by the earliest killing frosts on record at the Weather Bureau (September 23, 24, 25, and 26). Many farms have been abandoned; still more are only halfway farmed; many tenants and small landlords have moved out. Delinquencies on payments due on farm loans in that area have generally been bad, but coming installments may be met a little better, due to somewhat better prices for all dark tobaccos, though nothing like as high as burley.

The development of dairying has proceeded rather rapidly, in practically all parts of the State. Several condenseries and creameries have been built, and cream-buying stations have been spread. Even in western Kentucky individual farmers may be found who have done well, most of them through dairying, but some through fruit growing, sheep, or poultry. In the areas where dairying has

taken hold, those farmers generally are found meeting their payments and doing well.

Farm indebtedness is generally heavy, especially in western Kentucky. In that area, insurance companies, local banks, joint stock banks, and land banks, hold many farms, and would hold a great many more of them if they pressed for payments.

Kentucky farmers may therefore be considered roughly as in fair to good condition in the richer areas of central Kentucky; in fair to poor condition in central and northern Kentucky as a whole; with sharp improvement indicated and gradually materializing as burley tobacco is disposed of at continuing high prices. This area is therefore doing fairly well, payments generally are being cleaned up, and improvement is apparently definite and solid. Western Kentucky apparently is feebly beginning to work out of its worst condition, though still in very bad condition, as a whole. The improvement is coming chiefly from somewhat better prices on dark tobaccos, and from the leaven of dairying, which is rapidly increasing.

Farm land values are badly down in western Kentucky, with practically no buyers. In central and northern Kentucky the high burley tobacco prices have stiffened prices a little.

H. F. BRYANT.

#### TEXAS

Taken as a whole, the 1928 crop season was fairly satisfactory. While the prices received for farm produce were disappointing in many respects, the total income was greater than for the preceding year. Except in a few sections, where moisture was lacking, or weather conditions were unfavorable, the farmers were able to liquidate their indebtedness, and many retained a surplus to carry them into the next year. Livestock conditions remained on a high level during the year with demand and prices above recent years.

The past season was a good example of what might happen in cotton production were it practicable to control the boll weevil. During late July and early August there occurred a period when weevil were relatively inactive, and in this time enough fruit was put on by the plants to break production records in numerous localities in the eastern half of the State. In portions of the western half, however, the bollworm was unusually destructive. The yield per acre for the year was well above the average, and only 1926 exceeded the number of bales produced, yet the value of the crop exceeded that of 1926 by almost \$150,000,000.

Wheat, oats, barley, and rye were badly hurt by low temperatures early in 1928, with the result that some 600,000 fewer acres remained for harvest than during 1927. Most of this acreage was replanted with cotton, corn, and grain sorghum. Corn did not yield so well as during the preceding year, yet exceeded somewhat the 10-year average. Timely rains in the principal grain-sorghum counties of the Northwest enabled this crop to yield exceptionally well. The production of hay was about as usual and the price good. Other field crops did fairly well. Total returns from the principal truck crops were in line with those of 1927, although prices in many instances were lower. Car loadings of fruits and vegetables exceeded 1927 by some 11,000 cars.

The condition of pastures during the year was below the 10-year average, particularly was this true early in the season. Notwith-

standing, all kinds of livestock did well and are entering the winter in good condition. Receipts of cattle at Fort Worth were less than in 1927, but the numbers of hogs and sheep were greater. Poultry production continues to increase. Owing to unusual losses during the late spring, fewer turkeys were marketed than during last fall. Dairying is receiving a belated impetus from the establishment of cheese factories in several points in the State.

Increased returns from crops and livestock are reflected in the business situation of the State. With the exception of dry goods, the wholesale trade was greater than during the preceding year and the total sales of department stores were also larger. Bank deposits and savings accounts have shown a steady increase. Portland cement manufacture has remained at a high level, but lumber loadings were lower than in 1927. Business failures in Texas show a marked decrease. Building permits in 35 cities during the year were somewhat below those of the preceding year. Returns from oil leases and royalties have swelled the income of landowners and others. More than 6,000 new wells were completed during the year, with the petroleum production more than 30,000,000 barrels in excess of that of 1927. The number of new charters issued and industrial power production greatly exceeded the 1927 record. Cotton cloth manufactured in the State was less than in the year preceding, only about 75,000 bales being consumed, which is the production of one of the larger counties.

H. H. SCHUTZ.

#### NEW MEXICO

The acreage of important crops for 1928 will total about 1,237,000. This compares with about 1,012,000 for 1927. The year 1926 was an exceptionally favorable one for dry farming, and it showed an acreage of 1,333,000. It will thus be seen that the acreage for 1928 is about the average of the two former years. The production of most crops in 1928 exceeds those for 1927. The year 1927 being a very dry one resulted in small crop yields in the dry-farm areas.

The 1927 movement of cattle amounted to 653,000, which is the largest on record. The next largest number, having been moved in 1922, amounted to 652,000 head. The 1927 sheep movement amounted to 638,000 head, 564,000 of which were lambs. This was the largest annual movement since 1917.

The month of December, 1927, was cold and dry, and resulted in some seasonal shrinkage in cattle and sheep, but most of them went into winter in fairly good shape. No movement was necessary, except from the southeastern part of the State.

During January, 1928, the ranges became very dry, but grass was good and feed plentiful. The condition of cattle and sheep for this season of the year was very good, and the losses were light. The winter was mild and little feeding was necessary. Wool was contracted at from 23 cents to 30 cents; lambs, 10 cents to 11 cents; calves, \$30 to \$35; yearlings, \$40 to \$45; cows, \$40 to \$50; and mohair, 50 cents to 57 cents.

During February some moisture was received, which resulted in some grass and weeds in the southern counties, and in filling water holes for stock. The southeastern part of the State failed to receive any precipitation, but cattle and sheep both were in fairly good shape for winter, and prospects indicated good calf and lamb crops.

March continued favorable to livestock, but moisture was needed in many localities. The winter was mild and early feed developed where moisture was good, and the weather was not too cold.

The winter wheat crop had passed the winter so far with but little moisture, and the April 1 report indicated a condition of 60 per cent. Frost was reported at this time to have killed most of the peaches and pears, and many of the apples. The intentions-to-plant survey made at this time indicated an increase over the 1927 acreage, but less than that shown at harvest time.

The May 1 report indicated a condition of 62 per cent for winter wheat, with an abandonment of 37 per cent. This left 171,000 acres, and before the crop was harvested, further abandonment resulted, leaving only 150,000 acres, that produced 1,500,000 bushels of wheat. This compares with only 150,000 bushels in 1927, and 4,876,000 bushels harvested in 1926.

The June 1 report showed the month of May was cold and wet in the north and west. Rain and snowstorms resulted in heavy losses in calves and lambs. In some sections of the southeast, calf and lamb losses also occurred from dry weather and a lack of green feed to furnish milk. The wool clip was light, clean, and of long fiber. Much of the wool not contracted early was sold as high as 33 cents. Winter wheat was reported at 65 per cent condition, compared with a 10 per cent condition as of June 1 for the 1927 crop. The June report indicated a condition of 40 per cent for apples; 25 per cent for peaches; and 33 per cent for pears.

The July 1 report showed heavy lamb losses during May and June, and a crop not to exceed 60 per cent. The dry, hot June winds dried out the soil, and did much damage to the ranges and small-grain crops that were reported in fair condition June 1. However, most of the crops indicated a production above the figures shown at harvest, in spite of the small abandonment after July 1.

Reports as of August 1 indicated weather was very dry from May 15 to July 15 over much of the State. Rains started about July 20, which was too late to plant most crops, but benefited ranges and furnished much-needed stock water. Crops at this time showed a decline in condition from that of July 1.

During the month of September, rains were rather general over the southeastern part of the State, and local showers covered most of the north and west sections. The demand and price for cattle and sheep remained good, and sheepmen reported few ewes and lambs would be marketed.

The condition of ranges was reported good as of October 1, and livestock were going into winter in good shape, with the exception of a few localities in the north and west where grass and feed were short.

The November report indicated lots of rain during October, which came too late to benefit crops, with the exception of winter wheat. It filled water holes on the ranges, however, and will no doubt assist in bringing early spring feed on southern ranges. During the month there was a sharp decline in demand and price of both cattle and sheep.

The movement of cattle for the 11 months up to December 1 amounted to about 588,000 head. This exceeds last year's movement to that date by about 8,000 head.

R. F. HARE.